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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/020,688	12/14/2001	Robert McMillen	41575/27975	7323

29493 7590 06/04/2004
HUSCH & EPPENBERGER, LLC
190 CARONDELET PLAZA
SUITE 600
ST. LOUIS, MO 63105-3441

EXAMINER

EDELL, JOSEPH F

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3636

DATE MAILED: 06/04/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/020,688

Applicant(s)

MCMILLEN, ROBERT

Examiner

Joseph F Edell

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 March 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 3-17 and 20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 3-17 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 14 December 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 05 March 2004 has been entered.

Drawings

2. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the amended description: 27. Applicant states that proposed drawing changes were submitted on 13 June 2003; however, no proposed drawings were submitted. A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

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(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 3-17 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,619,739 to McMillen in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,092,871 to Beaulieu.

McMillen discloses an ergonomic support that is basically the same as that recited in claims 3-17 and 20 except that the device lacks a pressure plate, as recited in the claims. See Figures 1-15 of McMillen for the teaching that the ergonomic support has a housing 66 (Fig. 5) with an arcuate channel, an extending element 52 (Fig. 5) with a pressure surface end and an arcuate encapsulated end, an actuator 68 (Fig. 5) anchored to the housing, and a traction element 70 (Fig. 5) with a first end engaging the anchor and a second end in tractive communication with the arcuate encapsulating end of the extending element. Beaulieu shows an ergonomic support similar to that of McMillen wherein an extending element 50 (Fig. 3) has attached thereto a pressure plate 46 (Fig. 3) with a medial axis attached to the pressure surface end, curvilinear shape, tapered ends, and is as wide and greater in height than the pressure surface end. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the ergonomic support of McMillen such that the support has a pressure plate attached to the pressure surface end of the extending element wherein the pressure plate is curvilinear, has tapered ends, and has a medial axis attached to the pressure surface end that is as wide and greater height than the pressure surface end, such as the ergonomic support disclosed in Beaulieu. One would

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have been motivated to make such a modification in view of the suggestion in Beaulieu that the pressure plate attached to the extending element provides minimum and maximum support for the lumbar region of a user.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 3-17 and 20 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

The following patents are cited to further show the state of the art with respect to ergonomic supports: U.S. Pat. No. 6,652,029 to McMillen.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph F. Edell whose telephone number is (703) 605-1216. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri. 8:30am-5:00pm.

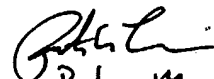
Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-

2168.



JE

May 28, 2004



Peter M. Cuomo
SPE
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